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AN EARLY MUSHROOM — NAUCORIA PEDIADES Fr.

Arthur L. Smith, Columbus, Ohio.

This is the first mushroom of the season. It was found April 3, 1906, growing on twigs and in the grass. Even then some of the specimens showed signs of old age and decay. The plant was found in considerable abundance on April 13, after a warm rain; later but two or three were found.

Naucoria belongs to the Ochre-Spored Agarics, and corresponds to Collybia among the White-Spored species. Indeed, on cursory examination, one would be almost sure to call it Collybia.

Atkinson says for the description of the genus, "Gills free or attached, but not decurrent, and stem is cartilaginous." But he does not mention this interesting little species. McIlvaine gives a longer description of the genus, and lists also this species. In my specimens, the pileus was two or three cm. broad, and quite irregular in shape. It varies from convex when young, to flat or even reflexed when older.

The color of the pileus varies with the dryness. Most of the specimens grew in moist places, and were a medium brown color. But those that were dry on the surface and those that dried out afterwards were a quite light brown. The contrast was marked. If the dry plants were wet, they soon returned to the deeper brown. All parts of the plants were of nearly the same color as the wet pileus. The spore print is ferruginous, while the individual spores are 6×4 mic. The hollow subcartilaginous stem is irregular and often flattened.

Supt. M. E. Hard, to whom specimens were sent, says, "It is without doubt 'Naucoria pediaes Fr.', and is edible." I did not test its edible qualities, but did find when raw the taste insipid. The illustration, Fig. 183, represents two of these plants in their native habitat.



Fig. 183. NAU-CO'-RI-A PE-DI'-A-DES. For description see text.